LVT (1)—The 'Amtrac'

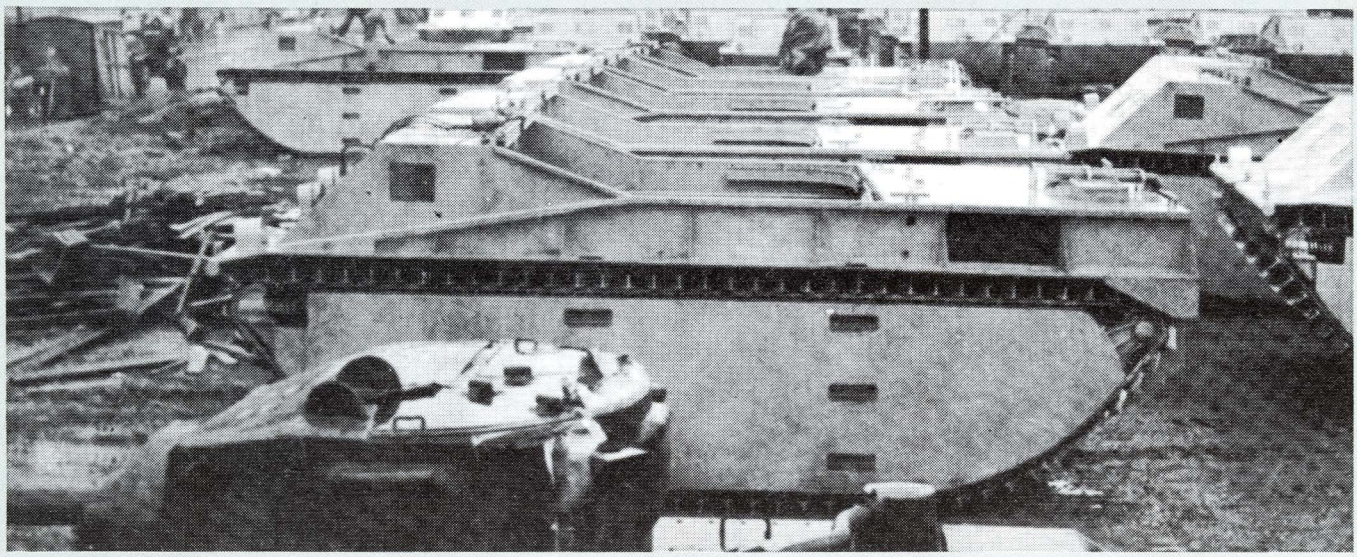
While the Marine Corps was developing amphibious warfare doctrine during the 1920s and 1930s, it was apparent that a motorized amphibian vehicle was needed to transport men and equipment from ships across fringing reefs and beaches into battle, particularly when the beach was defended.

In 1940, the Marines adopted the Landing Vehicle, Tracked (1), designed by Donald Roebling. More commonly known as the "amtrac" (short for amphibian tractor), the LVT(1) had a driver's cab in front and a small engine compartment in the rear, with the bulk of the body used for carrying space. During the next three years, 1,225 LVT(1)s were built, primarily by the Food Machinery Corporation.

The LVT(1) was constructed of welded steel and was propelled on both land and water by paddle-type treads. Designed solely as a supply vehicle, it could carry 4,500 pounds of cargo. In August 1942, the LVT(1) first saw combat on Guadalcanal with the 1st Amphibian Tractor Battalion, 1st Marine Division. Throughout the Solomon Islands campaigns, the LVT(1) provided Marines all types of logistical support, moving thousands of tons of supplies to the front lines. At times they also were pressed into tactical use: moving artillery pieces, holding defensive positions, and occasionally supporting Marines in the attack with their machine guns. They also were used as pontoons to support bridges across Guadalcanal rivers.

The LVT proved to be more seaworthy than a boat of comparable size; it was able to remain afloat with its entire cargo hold full of water. However, defects in the design soon became apparent. The paddle treads on the tracks and the rigid suspension system were both susceptible to damage when driven on land and did not provide the desired speeds on land or water. Although the LVT(1) performed admirably against undefended beachheads, its lack of armor made it unsuitable for assaults against the heavily defended islands of the central Pacific. This weakness was apparent during the fighting in the Solomon Islands, but LVT(1)s with improvised armor were still in use at the assault on Tarawa, where 75 percent of them were lost in three days.

The LVT(1) proved its value and validated the amphibious vehicle concept through the great versatility and mobility it demonstrated throughout numerous campaigns in the Pacific. Although intended solely for supply purposes, it was thrust into combat use in early war engagements. In its initial role as a support vehicle, the LVT(1) delivered ammunition, supplies and reinforcements that made the difference between victory and defeat.—*Second Lieutenant Wesley L. Feight, USMC*



forces to the scene" and designating transports and carriers as targets for heavy bombing. The messages were sent in plain language, emphasizing the plight of the threatened garrison. And the enemy response was prompt and characteristic of the months of naval air and surface attacks to come.

At 1030 on 7 August, an Australian coastwatcher hidden in the hills of the islands north of Guadalcanal signalled that a Japanese air strike composed of heavy bombers, light bombers, and fighters was headed for the island. Fletcher's pilots, whose carriers were positioned 100 miles south of Guadalcanal, jumped the approaching planes 20 miles northwest of the landing areas before they could disrupt the operation. But the Japanese were not daunted by the setback; other planes and ships were enroute to the inviting target.

On 8 August, the Marines consolidated their positions ashore, seizing the airfield on Guadalcanal and establishing a beachhead. Supplies were being unloaded as fast as landing craft could make the turnaround from ship to shore, but the shore

Marine Corps Personal Papers Collection

Immediately after assault troops cleared the beachhead and moved inland, supplies and equipment, inviting targets for enemy bombers, began to litter the beach.

party was woefully inadequate to handle the influx of ammunition, rations, tents, aviation gas, vehicles – all gear necessary to sustain the Marines. The beach itself became a dumpsite. And almost as soon as the initial supplies were landed, they had to be moved to positions nearer Kukum village and Lunga Point within the planned perimeter. Fortunately, the lack of Japanese ground opposition enabled Vandegrift to shift the supply beaches west to a new beachhead.

Japanese bombers did penetrate the American fighter screen on 8 August. Dropping their bombs from 20,000 feet or more to escape antiaircraft fire, the enemy planes were not very accurate. They concentrated on the ships in the channel, hitting and damaging a number of them and sinking the destroyer *Jarvis* (DD 393). In their battles to turn back the attacking planes, the carrier fighter squadrons lost 21 Wildcats on 7-8 August.

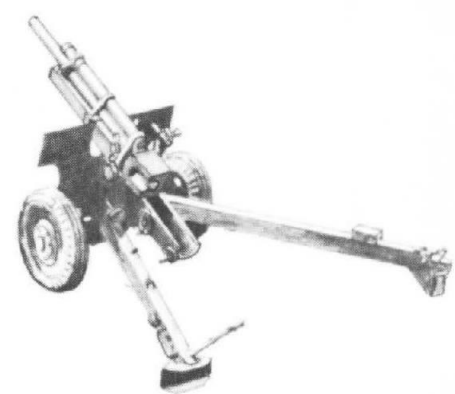
The primary Japanese targets were the Allied ships. At this time, and for a thankfully and unbelievably long time to come, the Japanese commanders at Rabaul grossly underestimated the strength of Vandegrift's forces. They thought the Marine landings constituted a reconnaissance in force, perhaps 2,000 men, on Guadalcanal. By the evening of 8 August, Vandegrift had 10,900 troops ashore on Guadalcanal and another 6,075 on Tulagi. Three infantry regiments had landed and each had a supporting 75mm pack howitzer battalion – the 2d and 3d Battalions, 11th Marines on Guadalcanal, and the 3d Battalion, 10th Marines on Tulagi. The 5th Battalion, 11th Marines' 105mm howitzers were in general support.

That night a cruiser-destroyer force of the Imperial Japanese Navy reacted to the American invasion with a stinging response. Admiral Turner had positioned three cruiser-destroyer groups to bar the Tulagi-Guadalcanal approaches. At the Battle of Savo, the Japanese demonstrated their superiority in night fighting at this stage of the war, shattering two of Turner's covering forces without loss to themselves. Four heavy cruisers went to the bottom – three American, one Australian – and another lost her bow. As the sun came up over what soon would be called "Ironbottom Sound," Marines watched grimly as Higgins boats swarmed out to rescue survivors. Approximately 1,300 sailors died that night and another 700 suffered wounds or were badly burned. Japanese casualties numbered less than 200 men.

The Japanese suffered damage to only one ship in the encounter, the cruiser *Chokai*. The American cruisers *Vincennes* (CA 44), *Astoria* (CA 34), and *Quincy* (CA 39) went to the bottom, as did the Australian Navy's HMAS *Canberra*, so critically damaged that she had to be sunk by American torpedoes. Both the cruiser *Chicago* (CA 29) and destroyer *Talbot* (DD 114) were badly damaged. Fortunately for the Marines ashore, the Japanese force – five heavy cruisers, two light cruisers, and a destroyer – departed before dawn without attempting to disrupt the landing further.

When the attack-force leader, Vice Admiral Gunichi Mikawa, returned to Rabaul, he expected to receive the accolades of his superiors. He did get those, but he also found himself the subject of criticism. Admiral Isoroku Yamamoto, the Japanese fleet commander, chided his subordinate for failing to attack the transports. Mikawa could only reply, somewhat lamely, that he did not know Fletcher's aircraft carriers were so far away from Guadalcanal. Of equal significance to the Marines on the beach, the Japanese naval victory caused celebrating superiors in Tokyo to allow the event to overshadow the

U.S. 105mm Howitzer

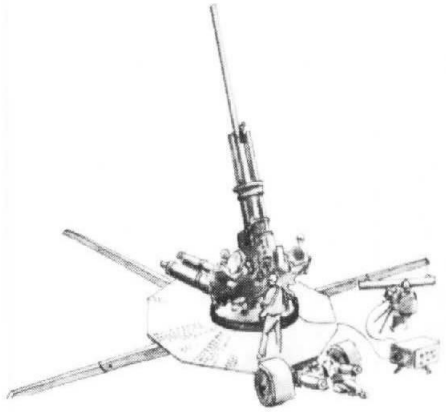


importance of the amphibious operation.

The disaster prompted the American admirals to reconsider Navy support for operations ashore. Fletcher feared for the safety of his carriers; he had already lost about a quarter of his fighter aircraft. The commander of the expeditionary force had lost a carrier at Coral Sea and another at Midway. He felt he could not risk the loss of a third, even if it meant leaving the Marines on their own. Before the Japanese cruiser attack, he obtained Admiral Ghormley's permission to withdraw from the area.

At a conference on board Turner's flagship transport, the *McCawley*, on the night of 8 August, the admiral told General Vandegrift that Fletcher's impending withdrawal meant that he would have to pull out the amphibious force's ships. The Battle of Savo Island reinforced the decision to get away before enemy aircraft, unchecked by American interceptors, struck. On 9 August, the transports withdrew to Noumea. The unloading of supplies ended abruptly, and ships still half-full steamed away. The forces ashore had 17 days' rations – after counting captured Japanese food – and only four days' supply of ammunition for all weapons. Not only did the ships take away the rest of the supplies, they also took the Marines still on board, including the 2d Marines' headquarters element. Dropped off at the island of Espiritu Santo in the New Hebrides, the infantry Marines and their commander, Colonel Arthur, were most unhappy and remained so until they finally reached Guadalcanal on 29 October.

Ashore in the Marine beachheads, General Vandegrift ordered rations reduced to two meals a day. The reduced food intake would last for six weeks, and the Marines would become very familiar with Japanese canned fish and rice. Most of the Marines smoked and they were soon disgustedly smoking Japanese-issue brands. They found that the separate paper filters that came with the cigarettes were necessary to keep the fast-burning tobacco from scorching their lips. The retreating ships had also hauled away empty sand bags and valuable engineer tools. So the Marines used Japanese shovels to fill Japanese rice bags with sand to strengthen their defensive positions.



U.S. 90mm Antiaircraft Gun

The Marines dug in along the beaches between the Tenaru and the ridges west of Kukum. A Japanese counter-landing was a distinct possibility. Inland of the beaches, defensive gun pits and foxholes lined the west bank of the Tenaru and crowned the hills that faced west toward the Matanikau River and Point Cruz. South of the airfield where densely jungled ridges and ravines abounded, the beachhead perimeter was guarded by outposts and these were manned in large part by combat support troops. The engineer, pioneer, and amphibious tractor battalion all had their positions on the front line. In fact, any Marine with a rifle, and that was virtually every Marine, stood night defensive duty. There was no place within the perimeter that could be counted safe from enemy infiltration.

Almost as Turner's transports sailed away, the Japanese began a pattern of harassing air attacks on the beachhead. Sometimes the raids came during the day, but the 3d Defense Battalion's 90mm antiaircraft guns forced the bombers to fly too high for effective bombing. The erratic pattern of bombs, however, meant that no place was safe near the airfield, the preferred target, and no place could claim it was bomb-free.

When ships carrying barbed wire and engineering tools needed ashore were forced to leave the Guadalcanal area because of enemy air and surface threats, Marines had to prepare such hasty field expedients as this cheval de frise *of sharpened stakes.*
Department of Defense (USMC) Photo 5157

General Vandegrift and His 1st Marine Division Staff

Whenever a work about the Guadalcanal operation is published, one of the pictures always included is that of Major General Alexander A. Vandegrift, 1st Marine Division commanding general, and his staff officers and commanders, who posed for the photograph on 11 August 1942, just four days after the assault landings on the island. Besides General Vandegrift, there are 40 Marines and one naval officer in this picture, and each one deserves a page of his own in Marine Corps history.

Among the Marines, 23 were promoted to general officer rank and three became Commandants of the Marine Corps: General Vandegrift and Colonels Cates and Pate. The naval officer, division surgeon Commander Warwick T. Brown, MC, USN, also made flag officer rank while on active duty and was promoted to vice admiral upon retirement.

Four of the officers in the picture served in three wars. Lieutenant Colonels Gerald C. Thomas, division operations officer, and Randolph McC. Pate, division logistics officer, served in both World Wars I and II, and each commanded the 1st Marine Division in Korea. Colonel William J. Whaling similarly served in World Wars I and II, and was General Thomas' assistant division commander in Korea. Major Henry W. Buse, Jr., assistant operations officer, served in World War II, Korea, and the Vietnam War. Others served in two wars—World Wars I and II, or World War II and Korea. Represented in the photograph is a total of nearly 700 years of cumulative experience on active Marine Corps service.

Three key members of the division—the Assistant Division Commander, Brigadier General William H. Rupertus; the Assistant Chief of Staff, G-1, Colonel Robert C. Kilmartin, Jr.; and the commanding officer of the 1st Raider Battalion, Lieutenant Colonel Merritt A. Edson—were not in this picture for a good reason. They were on Tulagi, where Rupertus headed the Tulagi Command Group with Kilmartin as his chief of staff, and Edson commanded the combat troops. Also notably absent from this photograph was the commander of the 7th Marines, Colonel James C. Webb, who had not joined the division from Samoa, where the regiment had been sent before the division deployed overseas.

In his memoir, *Once a Marine*, General Vandegrift explained why this photograph was taken. The division's morale was affected by the fact that Vice Admiral Frank Jack Fletcher was forced to withdraw his fleet from the area—with many of his ships not yet fully unloaded and holding more than half of the division's supplies still needed ashore. Adding to the Marines' uneasiness at seeing their naval support disappear below the horizon, was the fact that they had been under almost constant enemy air attacks beginning shortly after their landing on Guadalcanal. In an effort to counter the adverse influence on morale of the day and night air attacks, Vandegrift began making tours of the division perimeter every morning to talk to as many of his Marines as possible, and to keep a personal eye on the command. As he noted:

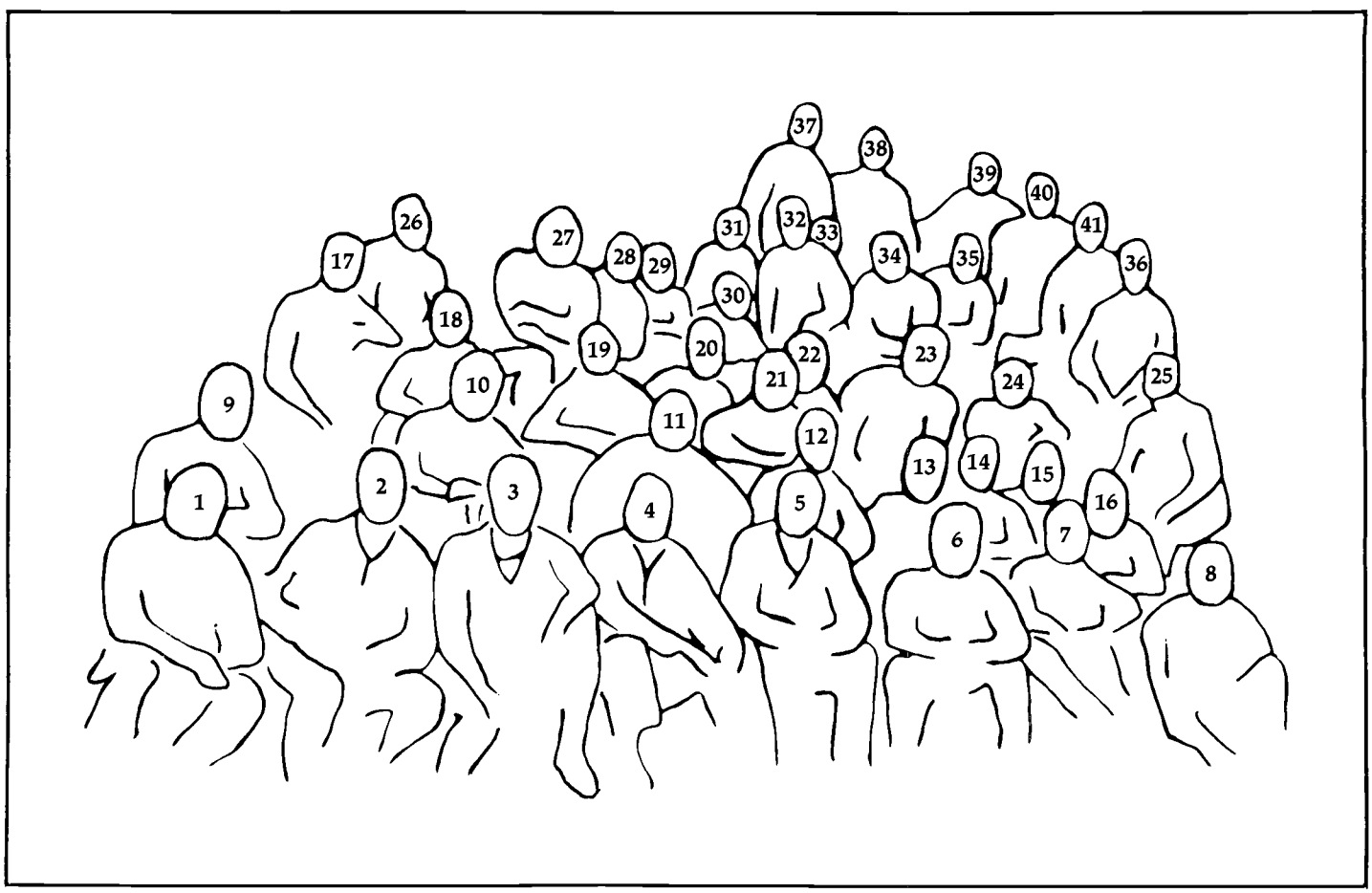
> By August 11, the full impact of the vanished transports was permeating the command, so again I called a conference of my staff and command officers . . . . I ended the conference by posing with this fine group of officers, a morale device that worked because they thought if I went to the trouble of having the picture taken then I obviously planned to enjoy it in future years.

Recently, General Merrill B. "Bill" Twining, on Guadalcanal a lieutenant colonel and assistant D-3, recalled the circumstances of the photograph and philosophized about the men who appeared in it:

> The group is lined up on the slope of the coral ridge which provided a degree of protection from naval gunfire coming from the north and was therefore selected as division CP . . . .
>
> There was no vital reason for the conclave. I think V[andegrift] just wanted to see who was in his outfit. Do you realize these people had never been together before? Some came from as far away as Iceland . . . .
>
> V[andegrift] mainly introduced himself, gave a brief pep talk . . . . I have often been asked how we could afford to congregate all this talent in the face of the enemy. We didn't believe we (*at the moment*) faced any threat from the Japanese. The defense area was small and every responsible commander could reach his CP in 5 minutes and after all there were a lot of good people along those lines. Most of the fresh-caught second lieutenants were battalion commanders two years later. We believed in each other and trusted.
>
> —*Benis M. Frank*

The General and His Officers on Guadalcanal, According to the Chart

1. Col George R. Rowan
2. Col Pedro A. del Valle
3. Col William C. James
4. MajGen Alexander A. Vandegrift
5. LtCol Gerald C. Thomas
6. Col Clifton B. Cates
7. Col Randolph McC. Pate
8. Cdr Warwick T. Brown, USN
9. Col William J. Whaling
10. Col Frank B. Goettge
11. Col LeRoy P. Hunt, Jr.
12. LtCol Frederick C. Biebush
13. LtCol Edwin A. Pollock
14. LtCol Edmund J. Buckley
15. LtCol Walter W. Barr
16. LtCol Raymond P. Coffman
17. LtCol Francis R. Geraci
18. LtCol William E. Maxwell
19. LtCol Edward G. Hagen
20. LtCol William N. McKelvy, Jr.
21. LtCol Julian N. Frisbie
22. Maj Milton V. O'Connell
23. Maj William Chalfant III
24. Maj Horace W. Fuller
25. Maj Forest C. Thompson
26. Maj Robert G. Ballance
27. Maj Henry C. Buse, Jr.
28. Maj James W. Frazer
29. Maj Henry H. Crockett
30. LtCol Lenard B. Cresswell
31. Maj Robert O. Brown
32. LtCol John A. Bemis
33. Col Kenneth W. Benner
34. Maj Robert B. Luckey
35. LtCol Samuel B. Taxis
36. LtCol Eugene H. Price
37. LtCol Merrill B. Twining
38. LtCol Walker A. Reaves
39. LtCol John D. Macklin
40. LtCol Hawley C. Waterman
41. Maj James C. Murray, Jr.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Department of Defense (USMC) Photo 150993

Col Kiyono Ichiki, a battle-seasoned Japanese Army veteran, led his force in an impetuous and ill-fated attack on strong Marine positions in the Battle of the Tenaru on the night of 20-21 August.

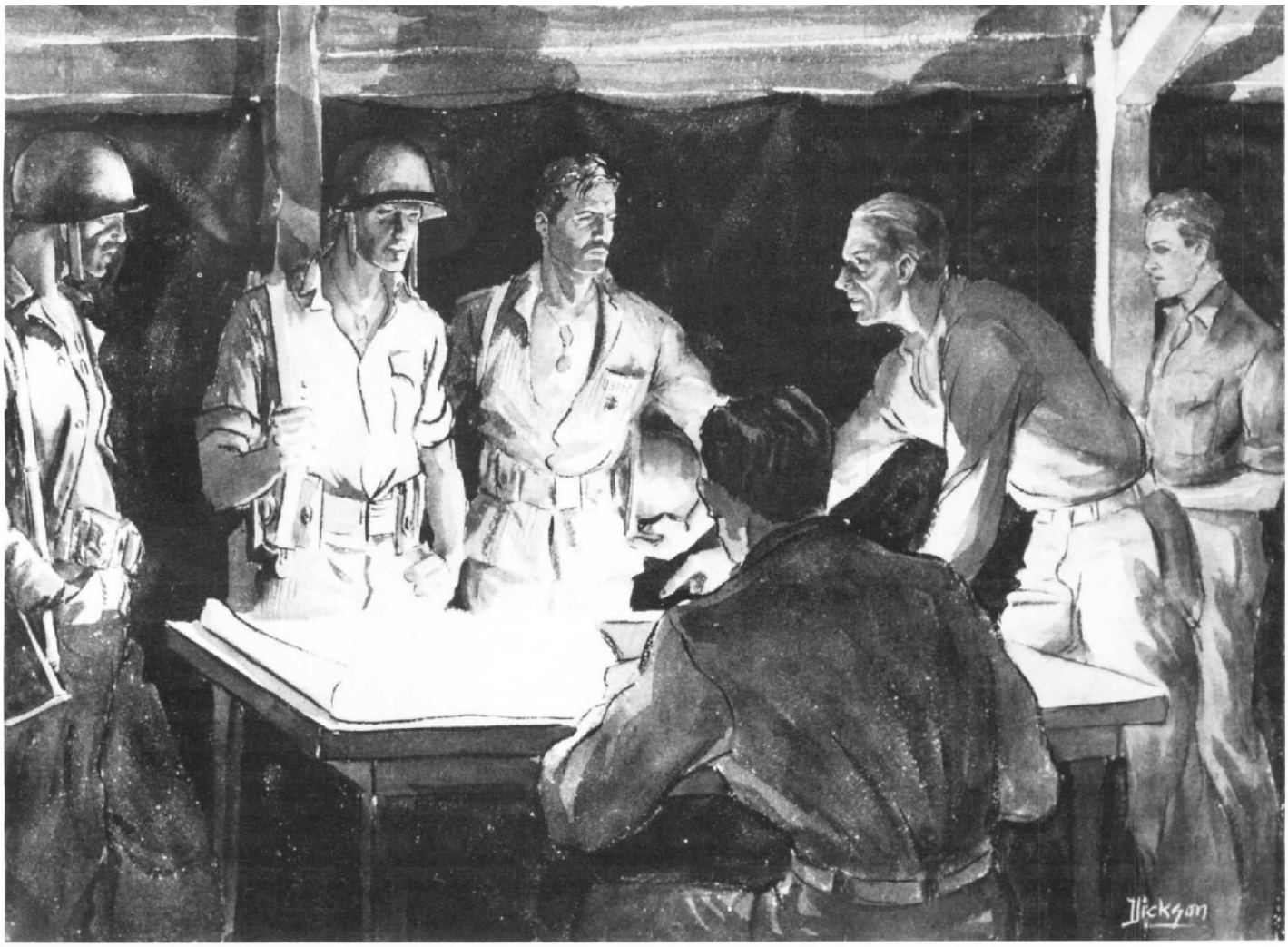
The most disturbing aspect of Japanese air attacks soon became the nightly harassment by Japanese aircraft which singly, it seemed, roamed over the perimeter, dropping bombs and flares indiscriminately. The nightly visitors, whose planes' engines were soon well known sounds, won the singular title "Washing Machine Charlie," at first, and later, "Louie the Louse," when their presence heralded Japanese shore bombardment. Technically, "Charlie" was a twin-engine night bomber from Rabaul. "Louie" was a cruiser float plane that signalled to the bombardment ships. But the harassed Marines used the names interchangeably.

Even though most of the division's heavy engineering equipment had disappeared with the Navy's transports, the resourceful Marines soon completed the airfield's runway with captured Japanese gear. On 12 August Admiral McCain's aide piloted in a PBY-5 Catalina flying boat and bumped to a halt on what was now officially Henderson Field, named for a Marine pilot, Major Lofton R. Henderson, lost at Midway. The Navy officer pronounced the airfield fit for fighter use and took off with a load of wounded Marines, the first of 2,879 to be evacuated. Henderson Field was the centerpiece of Vandegrift's strategy; he would hold it at all costs.

Although it was only 2,000 feet long and lacked a taxiway and adequate drainage, the tiny airstrip, often riddled with potholes and ren-

Of his watercolor painting "Instructions to a Patrol," Capt Donald L. Dickson said that three men have volunteered to locate a Japanese bivouac. The one in the center is a clean-cut corporal with the bearing of a high-school athlete. The man on the right is "rough and ready." To the one at left, it's just another job; he may do it heroically, but it's just another job.

Captain Donald L. Dickson, USMCR



dered unusable because of frequent, torrential downpours, was essential to the success of the landing force. With it operational, supplies could be flown in and wounded flown out. At least in the Marines' minds, Navy ships ceased to be the only lifeline for the defenders.

While Vandegrift's Marines dug in east and west of Henderson Field, Japanese headquarters in Rabaul planned what it considered an effective response to the American offensive. Misled by intelligence estimates that the Marines numbered perhaps 2,000 men, Japanese staff officers believed that a modest force quickly sent could overwhelm the invaders.

On 12 August, CinCPac determined that a sizable Japanese force was massing at Truk to steam to the Solomons and attempt to eject the Americans. Ominously, the group included the heavy carriers *Shokaku* and *Zuikaku* and the light carrier *Ryujo*. Despite the painful losses at Savo Island, the only significant increases to American naval forces in the Solomons was the assignment of a new battleship, the *South Dakota* (BB 57).

Imperial General Headquarters in Tokyo had ordered Lieutenant General Haruyoshi Hyakutake's *Seventeenth Army* to attack the Marine perimeter. For his assault force, Hyakutake chose the *35th Infantry Brigade* (Reinforced), commanded by Major General Kiyotake Kawaguchi. At the time, Kawaguchi's main force was in the Palaus. Hyakutake selected a crack infantry regiment – the *28th* – commanded by Colonel Kiyono Ichiki to land first. Alerted for its mission while it was at Guam, the Ichiki Detachment assault echelon, one battalion of 900 men, was transported to the Solomons on the only shipping available, six destroyers. As a result the troops carried just small amounts of ordnance and supplies. A follow-on echelon of 1,200 of Ichiki's troops was to join the assault battalion on Guadalcanal.

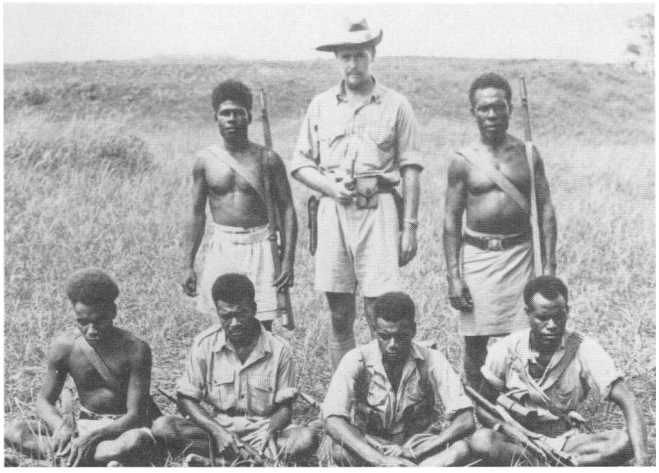
The Coastwatchers

A group of fewer than 1,500 native Coastwatchers served as the eyes and ears of Allied forces in reporting movements of Japanese units on the ground, in the air, and at sea.

Often performing their jobs in remote jungle outposts, the Coastwatchers were possessed of both mental and physical courage. Their knowledge of the geography and peoples of the Pacific made them invaluable additions to the Allied war effort.

The concept for this service originated in 1919 in a proposal by the Royal Australian Navy to form a civilian coastwatching organization to provide early warning in the event of an invasion. By the outbreak of war in September 1939, approximately 800 persons were serving as coastwatchers, operating observation posts mainly on the Australian coast. They were, at the outset, government officials aided by missionaries and planters who, as war with Japan neared, were placed under the control of the intelligence section of the Australian Navy.

Coastwatcher Capt W. F. Martin Clemens, British Solomon Islands Defence Force, poses with some of his constabulary.
National Archives Photo 80-G-17080 courtesy of Richard Frank



By 1942, the system of coastwatchers and the accompanying intelligence network covered an area of 500,000 square miles, and was placed under the control of the Allied Intelligence Bureau (AIB). The AIB coordinated Allied intelligence activities in the southwest Pacific, and had as its initial principal mission the collection of all possible information about the enemy in the vicinity of Guadalcanal.

Coastwatchers proved extremely useful to U.S. Marine forces in providing reports on the number and movement of Japanese troops. Officers from the 1st Marine Division obtained accurate information on the location of enemy forces in their objective areas, and were provided vital reports on approaching Japanese bombing raids. On 8 August 1942, Coastwatcher Jack Reed on Bougainville alerted American forces to an upcoming raid by 40 Japanese bombers, which resulted in 36 of the enemy planes being destroyed. The "early warning system" provided by the Coastwatchers helped Marine forces on Guadalcanal to hold onto the Henderson Field airstrip.

The Coastwatchers also rescued and sheltered 118 Allied pilots, including Marines, during the Solomons Campaign, often at the immediate risk of their own lives. Pipe-smoking Coastwatcher Reed also was responsible for coordinating the evacuation on Bougainville of four nuns and 25 civilians by the U.S. submarine *Nautilus*.

It is unknown exactly how many Coastwatchers paid the ultimate sacrifice in the performance of their duties. Many died in anonymity, without knowledge of the contribution their services had made to final victory. Perhaps they would be gratified to know that no less an authority than Admiral William F. Halsey recorded that the Coastwatchers saved Guadalcanal, and Guadalcanal saved the Pacific. – *Robert V. Aquilina*

National Archives Photo 80-G-37932

On 20 August, the first Marine Corps aircraft such as this F4F Grumman Wildcat landed on Henderson Field to begin combat air operations against the Japanese.

While the Japanese landing force was headed for Guadalcanal, the Japanese already on the island provided an unpleasant reminder that they, too, were full of fight. A captured enemy naval rating, taken in the constant patrolling to the west of the perimeter, indicated that a Japanese group wanted to surrender near the village of Kokumbona, seven miles west of the Matanikau. This was the area that Lieutenant Colonel Goettge considered held most of the enemy troops who had fled the airfield. On the night of 12 August, a reconnaissance patrol of 25 men led by Goettge himself left the perimeter by landing craft. The patrol landed near its objective, was ambushed, and virtually wiped out. Only three men managed to swim and wade back to the Marine lines. The bodies of the other members of the patrol were never found. To this day, the fate of the Goettge patrol continues to intrigue researchers.

After the loss of Goettge and his men, vigilance increased on the perimeter. On the 14th, a fabled character, the coastwatcher Martin Clemens, came strolling out of the jungle into the Marine lines. He had watched the landing from the hills south of the airfield and now brought his bodyguard of native policemen with him. A retired sergeant major of the British Solomon Islands Constabulary, Jacob C. Vouza, volunteered about this time to search out Japanese to the east of the perimeter, where patrol sightings and contacts had indicated the Japanese might have effected a landing.

The ominous news of Japanese sightings to the east and west of the perimeter were balanced out by the joyous word that more Marines had landed. This time the Marines were aviators. On 20 August, two squadrons of Marine Aircraft Group (MAG)-23 were launched from the escort carrier *Long Island* (CVE-1) located 200 miles southeast of Guadalcanal. Captain John L. Smith led 19 Grumman F4F-4 Wildcats of Marine Fighting Squadron (VMF)-223 onto Henderson's narrow runway. Smith's fighters were followed by Major Richard C. Mangrum's Marine Scout-Bombing Squadron (VMSB)-232 with 12 Douglas SBD-3 Dauntless dive bombers.

From this point of the campaign, the radio identification for Guadalcanal, Cactus, became increasingly synonymous with the island. The Marine planes became the first elements of what would informally be known as Cactus Air Force.

Wasting no time, the Marine pilots were soon in action against the Japanese naval aircraft which frequently attacked Guadalcanal. Smith shot down his first enemy Zero fighter on 21 August; three days later VMF-223's Wildcats intercepted a strong Japanese aerial attack force and downed 16 enemy planes. In this action, Captain Marion E. Carl, a veteran of Midway, shot down three planes. On the 22d, coastwatchers alerted Cactus to an approaching air attack and 13 of 16 enemy bombers were destroyed. At the same time, Mangrum's dive bombers damaged three enemy destroyer-transports attempting to reach Guadalcanal. On 24 August, the American attacking aircraft, which now included Navy scout-bombers from the *Saratoga*'s Scouting Squadron (VS) 5, succeeded in turning back a Japanese reinforcement convoy of warships and destroyers.

On 22 August, five Bell P-400 Air Cobras of the Army's 67th Fighter Squadron had landed at Henderson, followed within the week by nine

The first Army Air Forces P-400 Bell Air Cobras arrived on Guadalcanal on 22 August, two days after the first Marine planes, and began operations immediately.

National Archives Photo 208-N-4932

The 1st Marine Division Patch

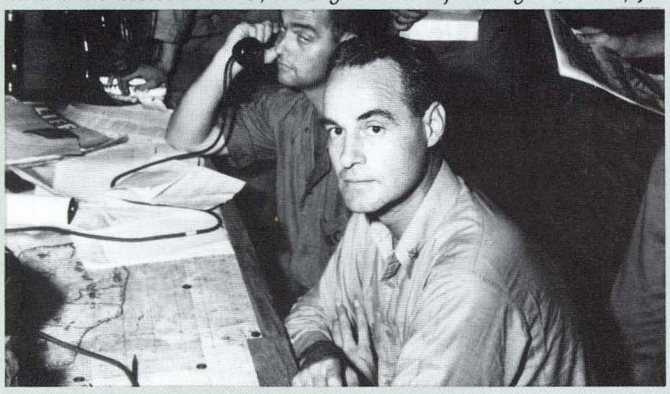
The 1st Division shoulder patch originally was authorized for wear by members of units who were organic or attached to the division in its four landings in the Pacific War. It was the first unit patch to be authorized for wear in World War II and specifically commemorated the division's sacrifices and victory in the battle for Guadalcanal.

As recalled by General Merrill B. Twining, a lieutenant colonel and the division's operations officer on Guadalcanal, for a short time before the 1st left Guadalcanal for Australia, there had been some discussion by the senior staff about uniforming the troops. It appeared that the Marines might have to wear Army uniforms, which meant that they would lose their identity and Twining came up with the idea for a division patch. A number of different designs were devised by both Lieutenant Colonel Twining and Captain Donald L. Dickson, adjutant of the 5th Marines, who had been an artist in civilian life. The one which Twining prepared on the flight out of Guadalcanal was approved by Major General Alexander A. Vandegrift, the division commander.

General Twining further recalled that he drew a diamond in his notebook and "in the middle of the diamond I doodled a numeral one . . . [and] I sketched in the word 'Guadalcanal' down its length . . . . I got to thinking that the whole operation had been under the Southern Cross, so I drew that in, too . . . . About an hour later I took the drawing up to the front of the aircraft to General Vandegrift. He said, 'Yes, that's it!' and wrote his initials, A.A.V., on the bottom of the notebook page."

After he arrived in Brisbane, Australia, Colonel Twining bought a child's watercolor set and, while confined to his hotel room by a bout of malaria, drew a bunch of diamonds on a big sheet, coloring each one differently. He then took samples to General Vandegrift, who chose one which was colored a shade of blue that he liked. Then Twining took the sketch to the Australian Knitting Mills to have it reproduced, pledging the credit of the post exchange funds to pay for the patches' manufacture. Within a week or two

Designer of the patch, LtCol Merrill B. Twining (later Gen) sits in the 1st Marine Division operations bunker. Behind him is his assistant D-3, a very tired Maj Henry W. Buse, Jr.



the patches began to roll off the knitting machines, and Colonel Twining was there to approve them. General Twining further recalled: "After they came off the machine, I picked up a sheet of them. They looked very good, and when they were cut, I picked up one of the patches. It was one of the first off the machine."

The division's post exchanges began selling the patches almost immediately and they proved to be popular, with Marines buying extras to give away as souvenirs to Australian friends or to send home to families. Before long, newly established Marine divisions, as well as the raider and parachute units, and as the aircraft wings, sea-going Marines, Fleet Marine Force Pacific units, and others, were authorized to have their own distinctive patch, a total of 33, following the lead of the 1st Marine Division. Marines returning to the United States for duty or on leave from a unit having a distinctive shoulder insignia were authorized to wear that insignia until they were assigned to another unit having a shoulder patch of its own. For many 1st Marine Division men joining another unit and having to relinquish the wearing of the 1st Division patch, this rankled.

Shortly after the end of the war, Colonel Twining went to now-Marine Commandant General Vandegrift saying that he "no longer thought Marines should wear anything on their uniforms to distinguish them from other Marines. He agreed and the patches came off for good."—*Benis M. Frank*